

# THE SUN

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## Step by step by step ...

### On the job for exercise

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Employees of Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County take pride in their stride, so much so that they literally keep track of every single step they take – even the baby steps.

Within a three month period, these energetic employees took more than 6 million steps for a fitness campaign, a huge leap in helping them speed up the process of leading a healthier lifestyle.

The campaign, Walk Your Socks Off, promoted by the California/Nevada Community Action Partnership (Cal/Neva), a state-wide agency that coordinates activities of partnerships around the state, was first developed as a way to involve staff and employees of CAP in some form of movement benefiting their health, said Patricia Nickols, executive director for Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County.

"They provided several grants to agencies to initiate a program in the community that would promote good health and lifestyles," she said. "We're putting a challenge to focus on this so that our employees understand the benefits as well as the clients."

When Gerald Brown, development director for CAP of San Bernardino County, became aware of the campaign he was more than ready to

jump on board.

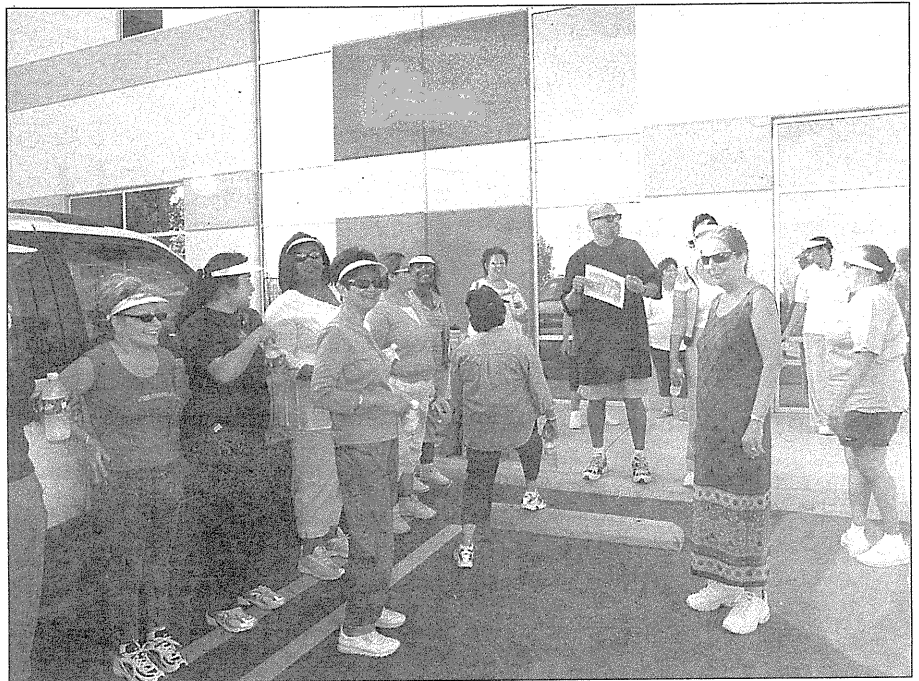
"I really thought it was a great idea," he said. "Actually a lot of people thought it was and really were interested in participating, and they did."

Brown said that a total of 60 employees from CAP took on the walking challenge and recorded their steps on a weekly basis for three months on a pedometer supplied by Cal/Neva.

"The goal for the campaign was to try to build up 10,000 steps a day, and people were finding that they were walking five to six thousand steps," he said. "It's amazing how much walking you do throughout your normal course on the job. Most of the time, you don't even think about it cause you're just doing it."

Not knowing that the campaign would spark such an interest in employees, CAP of San Bernardino County took it a bit further and decided to host a three mile, Walk Your Socks Off Walk-a-Thon on Aug. 18 in addition to the individually led monthly walking.

Employees like Naomi Norman who participated in the Walk-a-Thon, collected pledges to raise money for CAP programs. Walking more than 7,000 steps during the event, Norman was among the first to complete the walk in about 50 minutes. She also raised more than \$100 for the fundraiser.



COURTESY PHOTO

Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino staff.

"It was a good walk," Norman said. "I think this is a real positive thing. Plus it's good to know that we just aren't talking about doing it, we're really are taking steps to a healthier lifestyle."

For employees like Norman, the campaign and the Walk-a-Thon were a way to helping her reach her goal of becoming more active and eventually stop taking high blood pressure medicine. She plans on continuing to walk and hopes that by the end of the year to at least get six miles in during the week.

"I believe we've created a bit of a culture here with the walking," Brown said. "Everyone absolutely enjoyed it. I think we'll be able to build upon it and perhaps have

it become something even bigger later on."

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